PZ
3
.G2995U
FT MEADE
GenColl

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

1

85
L. C.

"In Ze Studio," an Idyl of the Housetops. By D. Higbee, Author of "In God's Country," and "The Scherzo in B-flat Minor."

Press of the Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, Atlanta, Ga. 1895.

Price, 50 Cents.

Soon to be issued from the press of the Franklin Printing and Publishing Co., Geo. W. Harrison, State Printer, Manager.

SIDE LIGHTS

WHAT THE SOCIETY EDITOR SAW.

BY D. HIGBEE.

Author of "In 'God's Country,'" "The Scherzo in B-Flat Minor," and "Un Ze Studio."

"Side Lights" consist of a few of the articles which appeared during a period of twelve years at the head of the Society Department of the Louisville Courier-Journal. They are not restricted to "Society" topics, but cover various subjects with no attempt at serious treatment. They represent merely the society editor's point of view, showing what she saw and how she saw it.

"UN ZE STUDIO."

An Idyl of the Housetops.

BY D. HIGBEE.

Author of "In 'God's Country,'" and
"The Scherzo In B-flat Minor."

ATLANTA, GA.
THE FRANKLIN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO.
Geo. W. Harrison, State Printer, Manager.
1895.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
COPYRIGHT
SEP 12 1895
CITY OF WASHINGTON.

PZ3
.G2995U

Copyright, 1895, by D. Higbee.

NOVEMBER IN KENTUCKY.

In purple billows the receding hills
Roll westward, tipped with fire. Far up the steep,
Embattled horizon they curl and leap—
A sea of amethyst, whose surge distills
A mist of palest rose. The sun fulfills
His course:—an instant on that weltering deep
Rides buoyantly; then caught in its wild sweep
His glory on its swelling ridges spills.

The motley maples reel across the plain
In garish tatters—green and gold and red.
Poor harlequins! To-morrow's wind and rain
Finding you shorn, and your mock splendor fled,
Will lash you wailing through the bleak domain
Where yesterday your foolish revel sped.

"UN ZE STUDIO."

I met them under protest.

McAllister, a friend of mine, himself a newspaper man, said to me one day:

"Go up and see the Dahls. They are delightful people and I know you will like them." Then he added, as though the thing had not been premeditated: "I wish you would write something about Dahl. He is really a great artist, but he might as well have followed Stanley into Africa as to stop here, where people know nothing about art, and care less."

"What is his line?" I asked indifferently, and McAllister replied: "Sculpture. I think he has some reputation abroad, but that goes for nothing here."

I promised to go up, but I did not. I had been working on a daily newspaper for nine years, and I was tired of being made to feel that I had come into the world for the express and exclusive purpose of lying about people in print. I was beginning to resent the fact that the consideration meted out to me by society at large was in exact proportion to the space I was able to fill with fulsome records of its doings. I knew that McAllister had the finest nose for ability of any man of my ac-

quaintance; I had unbounded confidence in his judgment in all matters relating to art; but I could not forget that he was human, and I knew by experience the difficulty of keeping the judicial faculty free from the clogs and hindrances of personal preference. The belief that McAllister wanted the Dahls written up because they were charming people and had pleased him, rather than because Dahl was a great artist, spread like a sable pall over my consciousness, and that suspicion which dwells forever in the breast of the writer for newspapers, uncoiled itself and suggested that Dahl probably had a handsome wife. The conviction that the

Dahls belonged to that "deserving" but incapable class which, like the poor, is always with us, got firmly fixed in my mind, and I therefore saw nothing of them until the city editor said to me one day as I was going out of the office with my assignments:

"By the way, I wish you would drop into Dahl's studio this afternoon and write something about that figure he has modeled for the ——— memorial. I don't know anything about Dahl, but Farnham, who has the contract for the monument, advertises with us quite extensively, and it may be just as well to make some mention of the figure, say about two sticks."

It was past the middle of the afternoon when I got around to Dahl's studio. It was crowded with visitors, in the midst of whom towered the clay model of a figure of heroic size, clad in the stiff and ungraceful garments of a United States soldier, holding a musket at "present."

I gave one timid but sweeping glance at it, and turned away. My heart sank to the toes of my shoes, and I began to mourn for McAllister as one mourns for a friend who has suddenly dropped dead. I could see now that in spite of the doubt and suspicion that had been uppermost in my mind, I had entertained a hope just sufficient to fill me with a sense of injury as I gazed at the

stiff and vacuous creation before me. At the first glance it was evident that the mere handiwork was of the highest order ; that the sculptor had given some attention to anatomy, and had executed his figure with elaborate care; but this only brought out more forcibly the poverty of the conception, which was barren and commonplace to the last degree. That a man whom McAllister had described as a great artist could find nothing more than this in one of the most superbly tragic episodes of the American history was too much.

The figure gave me a sense of soreness, as of one who had received a blow, and I made a desperate effort to get out of the room be-

fore some thoughtless person should add to my distress by asking me what I thought of it. I had elbowed my way to the door, and was laying my hand on the knob, opening my lungs at the same time for the breath of relief that was to follow my exit, when some one took me by the arm and drew me forcibly in another direction. It was McAllister, and I perceived with dismay that he was relentlessly drawing me toward the sculptor who stood in the center of the room bowing to a dozen people at once. Dextrously, and with no apology for the fraud he had practiced upon me, he opened a path and said with the insidious smile which distinguished him:

"Miss Harra, let me present Mr. Dahl. Mr. Dahl, this is Miss Harra, of the *Democrat.*"

The sculptor bowed with the most exquisite courtesy. He wore an artist's cap, a beard trimmed to a point after the foreign fashion. His English was so broken that it was only by the closest attention and then only with the greatest difficulty that I could understand him; but his speech was so musical, and his manner altogether so charming, that it was a sufficient pleasure to bask in his smile and listen to his voice without knowing what he said. I caught myself hoping that he would never learn to speak more distinctly, and wished that I

might, by some means, acquire his deliciously unintelligible accent. I could not place him as to nationality. He was neither German, French, Spanish, nor Italian; of that much I was sure, but had got no farther than this when, still holding me by the hand, and laying an arm across my shoulder, he drew me toward the other side of the room where stood a tall, dark woman with the most beautiful mouth I had ever seen, the faultless curves and color of which were enhanced by an expression of infinite sweetness. It was the mouth which first attracted me, but as I studied the face, I discovered that the eyes were not less beautiful. The features were

regular, although not following the Greek outline; the coloring rich, the pose of the whole body noble; but the poise of the head was especially striking. The moment I looked at her those oft-quoted lines of Tennyson,

> "A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
> And most divinely fair,"

came into my mind; only she was not "stiller than chisel'd marble," but charged with a sparkling animation and a bubbling wit that could not be wholly obscured by her imperfect command of an alien tongue. My taste in women, which had hitherto leaned to the petite, underwent a revolution as complete as it was instantaneous. I was still

far from forgiving McAllister for the unfair advantage he had taken of me, but I was beginning to understand that he was no longer a responsible person, and I was also beginning to measure, by its effect upon my own faculties, the power that had bewitched him.

"My vife, Miss Harra," said the sculptor. Then to her in most beguiling accents: "Zis is ze friend of McAllister. We haf heard him speak of her."

"A-h-h," said Mrs. Dahl as though the whole of her previous existence had been one weary waiting for the friend of McAllister. "Indeed we haf heard of her and we are most glad to see her. We

haf sought she was one of zose myssological persons like Yuno and Wenus. We are glad to see she is alive."

From her accent I should unhesitatingly have pronounced her French, for her speech, though broken and uncertain, was not precisely that of her husband; it was a trifle more familiar, a shade more musical, and the substitution of z for th, of w for r, of e for i, and her delicious inflection of e-short, which no English tongue can compass, were distinctly Gallic; but I discovered afterward that they were both Danes.

I found her quite as charming mentally as physically, and went on

talking to her, while the sculptor busied himself with the other visitors, who were continually coming and going. I forgot what had brought me to the studio, and lost sight entirely of the rigid clay figure towering above us, which was the subject of so many congratulatory remarks on all sides. I lingered until the short winter afternoon had drawn near its close, and only the dimmest twilight came in through the high north windows of the studio.

Suddenly I discovered that I was alone with the Dahls. The sculptor had bowed out the last visitor with his picturesque and, to an American, somewhat effusive cour-

tesy, and had taken a seat on the other side of me. He seemed rather fatigued, and for a moment nobody said anything. I knew that it was time for me to go, but I sat still, and presently I became aware that the sculptor and his wife were both regarding me furtively, with a certain deprecatory air, that seemed to me to be in some way connected with the figure looming above us in the dusk. The feeling came over me that the figure was a sort of nightmare to them as well as to me—a sort of skeleton-in-the-closet, which had just been uncovered in the presence of the community, without their knowledge or consent. It seemed that, now that the guests had departed, they were surrender-

ing themselves to the humiliation of the experience, and they did not mind my being there in the least. The silence lengthened, and nobody looked at the figure; it was like a corpse in a room from which all eyes instinctively turn away. On first finding myself alone with them, I was afraid they would ask me what I thought of the figure, and I was panic-stricken, for I knew that no matter what I might try to say with my tongue, my face would betray me. I began to feel very sorry for them without knowing why. Surely, if a man made a figure like that and called his friends to look at it, he could not have a very vivid sense of its imperfections. I was

annoyed at finding myself taking a subtle and incomprehensible attitude of condolence, as though the sculptor had been the victim of a calumny; while I knew my estimate to be just, I felt it to be inhuman.

In the effort to keep my eyes off the figure, I had fixed them steadily upon a corner of the room, and presently something that looked like a drawing, began to take shape there in the darkness. A large square of drawing paper, with some figures in the middle of it, was all I could see from where I sat, and I got up with a sense of infinite relief and went over to examine it. The sculptor and his wife followed

me into the corner with an alacrity that was explained by the sequel, and the former scratched a match and held it so that I could see.

Three tattered, disheveled figures on top of what seemed to be a fragment of broken wall were defending themselves with clubbed muskets against an attacking party, not shown in the drawing, but sufficiently indicated by the pose of the group. The man on the right had just received his death-wound, and was in the act of falling backward; the central figure, in a ragged shirt open to the waist, hatless, shoeless, and clad in what seemed to be the fragmentary reminiscence of a pair of trousers, was holding in its place

a flag, the staff of which had been shot in two, while with his other hand he held a musket, raised as if to strike. The third figure leaned over the wall in the act of beating back the enemy. Every line of the drawing was instinct with graphic power; alive with vigorous movement. Every muscle of the three figures stood out with the tense effort of a desperate struggle; the poses and grouping were eloquent of the courage of despair.

"That is great," I said. "What is it?"

"It iss ze dwawing my husband haf made for ze ——— monnyment," replied Mrs. Dahl, beaming.

"The ——— monument?" I re-

peated, gazing in bewilderment from the drawing to the figure and from the figure to the sculptor.

He answered me simply with a shrug of infinite disgust, and Mrs. Dahl came gallantly to the rescue.

"You see, my husband—what iss it you say—haf compete for ze monnyment, and he make ze dwawing; but ze committee haf given ze monnyment to Mr. Farnham, and he haf got us to make ze figyah; but, of course, he haf told us how to make him."

Then they both looked at me helplessly.

I felt like crying, and I am not sure that I did not. The tale was so simple, and, alas, so common; so full of the heart-break of genius re-

viled and spit upon, turning the other cheek for the sake of the filthy lucre which accompanied the insult, and was indeed a part of it; for even genius must have bread and butter, or at least bread. Here was a man charged with a fine enthusiasm for his art, full of ideas and equipped with the manual skill, without which the noblest conception must miscarry, being judged by this model, which somebody else had conceived in a spirit of niggardliness. Moreover, he was a stranger in a strange land, unfamiliar with the language, customs, temper of the people; worst of all unacquainted with the tricks by which contracts are secured; with his way to make, and

committed to the desperate scramble for the wherewithal to live.

"If I could only haf made him so, or so, or so," exclaimed the sculptor, throwing his body rapidly from one position into another. "But, no; it was zis, only zis," and he indicated the result with a gesture of despair.

"Yes," added Mrs. Dahl, almost tearfully, "he haf told us how many wrinkles to make in ze knee of ze twousers."

"You see," explained the sculptor, "when a man stand so, his twousers look so, like mine. I haf made him zis way, but zey will not haf so many wrinkles. I will take some out to-mowow."

Then, in spite of the tragic aspect of the case, they sat down on the lounge and laughed like a couple of children, and I laughed with them, though I felt more like crying.

I had the foolish habit of making the grievances of other people my own; and on this occasion I felt as if I had just seen a well-bred and peaceable individual wantonly struck in the face. The feeling clung to me in spite of the fact that they had already shaken off the gloom which had previously enwrapped them. The moment an appreciative eye fell upon his drawing, the whole aspect of the case changed for them. He had been vindicated, and that was all they cared for. The sculptor

instantly produced a bottle and some glasses, and when I declined to drink, solely on account of the time that I knew would be consumed in the operation, he said, with amazement and a childlike seriousness that deceived me, until I caught a glimpse of the riotous mirth penned in a corner of his eye :

"But McAllister haf told us you are a Kentuckian ?"

"Well, if McAllister has betrayed me, I cannot afford to shame my lineage," I replied, and took the glass.

As I sat between them on the broad, low lounge, draped with some Eastern stuff, each laid an arm across my shoulder, and Mrs. Dahl said :

"You are a dear little girl; you haf eyes all round your head."

Her manner was calculated to inspire a monumental conceit, and it was thus that I fell in love with the Dahls at first sight, just as McAllister had predicted.

Having fallen in love with the Dahls, it was natural that I should espouse their cause, and in my wrath at the indignity which had been put upon them, and my desire to avenge it, I forgot the city editor's injunction. I would have been glad to take a gun and go out after the obtuse creatures who did not know a good thing when they saw it; but, not being able to do this, I went over to the office and wrote

an incendiary notice of Dahl's exhibition, praising the drawing which had been rejected, reviling the figure which Farnham had ordered, and heaping derision upon the "committee of cowboys" who had accepted his bid.

The city editor, having given explicit instructions for the notice, merely glanced over it when it was handed to him. When it came to the managing editor in the proof, he was pressed for time; moreover, he did not know who had written it, and in running his eye hurriedly over the galley he missed the paragraph referring to Farnham. The notice got into the paper, and the next day when I reported at the

office, I found the staff in the condition best illustrated by a jar of buckwheat batter just ready for cakes. Farnham had been up demanding "a correction" and threatening to sue the paper for damages. The city editor was deeply grieved at having failed to discover that the notice contained a bomb. He felt that I had taken a base advantage of him, and he resented it. I could not deny that, as the French put it, "he had reason." The managing editor was unhappy in that he had been called upon to share the responsibility, and the counting-room was suffering from the withdrawal of Farnham's advertisement.

A palpable gloom brooded over

the lower floor. I was told as soon as I went in that the "Old Man" wanted to see me. When I got into the little cage where he transacted the business of a great enterprise, he looked at me over his glasses with a sort of weary resignation, and asked whether I had decided to devote my entire time to making trouble for the *Democrat.* He said that if I had an excuse to give for the notice under consideration, he was ready to hear it. The futility of attempting to make him see the Dahls as I had seen them was only too apparent; likewise the impossibility of imparting to him my view of the situation. I murmured some foolish remark about having stated

the facts, which only seemed to aggravate the offense. The "Old Man" drew from his pocket the clipping which Farnham had inclosed in his letter, demanding redress, and began to read it aloud, slowly.

I had long since grown accustomed to the fact that the official snicker-snee was suspended over my head by the merest thread of gossamer. With each paragraph that was read I could feel it grazing my neck.

"I consider that the meanest piece of writing I have ever seen in print," said the "Old Man," finally, intimating at the same time that he knew this was saying a good deal, in view of some of my previous

contributions to the paper. I held my breath as he continued running his eye up and down the column, and drew it again with infinite relief when he flung the clipping into the waste basket, and turning from me abruptly began sorting his mail. This indicated that the interview was at an end, and I went out crest-fallen, but glad to escape with my life. As I reached the steps McAllister was passing in the street. He paused long enough to remark caustically:

"Well, I see you have done your best to ruin Dahl with Farnham. He will never give him another job of course. I might have known that you would do it," he added

with an air of infinite superiority; "I never saw a woman in my life who had an ounce of judgment."

I was under the ban of general condemnation, for the people who had been to see the model and had spoken of it in the highest terms of praise, because they thought that was the thing to do, were incensed at having their opinions called in question. Only the Dahls received me with the kiss of peace and affected to make light of the evil I had brought upon them, by a zeal in their behalf that was not, it seemed, according to knowledge. They invited me to come and "loaf un ze studio" whenever I had a moment to spare, and I required

no second invitation. I went to see them often and I came at last to love them very dearly. I think that in spite of Dahl's ability as an artist, I was most attracted by their broad and comprehensive sympathy, their patience with bores, and their imperturbable amiability.

Persons of a carping disposition might have supposed that I was drawn to them on account of the delicious things they said about the stuff I ground out daily for the *Democrat*, and I am free to confess that my most vapid utterances took on a quite poetic charm when Mrs. Dahl read them aloud to her husband, as she sometimes did in my presence; but it was their charity,

and a certain guilelessness that I felt most when near them. I always came out from their presence with a sense of deep refreshing, of having been cleansed from I knew not what impurities, and when I visited them often, I found myself becoming steeped in a sort of blissful infatuation with the world at large, and myself in particular, which could only be properly tempered by rebuffs of a more than ordinarily brutal nature.

McAllister and I always referred to them as "the babes in the wood" —briefly "as the babes"; and their unwearying courtesy, of that ornate character which would be impossible to an American except on very

great occasions, was an inexhaustible source of wonder and amusement to both of us.

At first it seemed to me that their affection for each other was too spectacular to be real, but my envy grew apace as I came to understand that it was genuine and unfathomable; that what I saw on the surface was the merest ripple compared to the deep boundless joy which they took in each other. It was like a vast ocean of love and peace in which they were able to dip the whole world, and so regenerate it. They made the most ingenious and charming excuses for the people who did and said silly things. No point escaped them, for they were

alive to their finger tips with that sense of humor that is the salt of the earth; but they no sooner saw and laughed, than they began to throw over the foible the mantle of extenuation.

At the end of two years the Dahls went away, and I neither saw nor heard from them again until the memorable spring of '93 drew all feet to that great, blustering city where all roads met in that year of grace. I had followed the current, and there I found the sculptor and his wife. They had a studio in the topmost top of one of the "sky-scrapers" that have made Chicago famous, and an ideal flat in one of the suburbs. The artist had won

something of the reputation he had long deserved, and his studio was full of work that kept him occupied seven days in the week; nevertheless, the Dahls still found time, as of old, to smile with unwearying affability upon the bore and the blessing alike, and the studio was nearly always full of visitors. There were people of note and consequence, and better still, occasionally artists who knew what they were talking about and talked to some purpose; here, also, was that vast and invincible majority that gaped and dawdled, and took up the sculptor's time and prevented other people from enjoying themselves. I embraced the Dahls with joy, and

they made me royally welcome, inviting me, as of yore, to come and "loaf un ze studio" whenever I had a moment; but Sunday was about the only day that I was able to see anything of them, for when I was not busy myself they were overwhelmed with visitors. The spring went by like the whir of a great wheel. It seemed that we had scarcely exchanged greetings before the Dahls had packed their trunks to go abroad, where they expected to spend the summer.

On a certain Sunday afternoon, when the sculptor was hurrying to finish a bas-relief that was already past due, I was invited to come and lunch "un ze studio" and "make a

day of it," the last we should spend together until their return. It was a glorious June day. Through the high windows of the studio, which faced westward, a vigorous breeze was sweeping; below us the town lay like a black pit, its spires and towers looming dimly through dense columns of smoke and flying wreaths of steam. Beyond, the open prairie swam in liquid gold, its far horizon line so faint and dim as to give the effect of a marine view.

As I looked down into that smoky pit I could think of the town only as some terrible beast, crouching there in the shadow with every sinew tense, waiting for prey, and Bret Harte's lines to San Francisco

seemed to adjust themselves admirably to the situation:

"O lion's whelp, that hidest fast
In jungle growth of spire and mast;
I know thy cunning and thy greed,
Thy hard, high lust and wilful deed,
And all thy glory loves to tell
Of specious gifts material."

To-morrow I must go down into that pit and fight for my life, but to-day I was free, and I turned from the window with a deep sense of peace and respite to the hammock that had been stretched across the studio for my especial benefit, and lay there watching the sculptor scraping away at the bas-relief with his modeling pin, and listening to his wife who sat at the piano crooning an old Norse legend.

As I swung lazily back and forth, my eyes, wandering listlessly about the room, fell upon the photograph of a piece of statuary that I had never seen before.

"What is that?" I asked, as the song ceased; "something new?"

"No, it is somesing very old," replied the sculptor, twisting his head over his shoulder to follow my glance. "It is ze photograph of my Hercules." The way he wrapped his tongue around that first e was a joy to hear. "It was destwoyed in ze burning of ze Royal Gallery of ——," he added, pausing in his labors to refill one of the big German pipes, of which he kept two always

near him, smoking them, as it were, in relays.

"And you have never told me about it?" I said, reproachfully.

"O yes, we haf told you, but you did not care; you haf forgotten. It was of no consequence to you, zat small Hercules, made so many years ago."

He turned his head to look at me, and his features wore an expression of deep and abiding injury that was made inexpressibly comical by the mirth in his eye.

"I sink it was McAllister we told about it," said his wife, turning round on the stool. "Zat dreadful McAllister, who never writes to us, who has forgotten all about us,

and yet we go about loving him yust ze same."

"Ah, perhaps it was," admitted the sculptor, instantly relaxing the muscles of his face. "Ah," he went on, laughing, "Zat was a great time when I made my *Hercules*. It was in Germany," he continued, scratching carefully at the clay with his head on one side. "Ah, when we are young we can do everysing; when we are old we can do nussing." This in a tone of infinite sadness. "I am an old man now," and he drew himself together and shriveled under my eye to illustrate the advanced stage of decrepitude at which he had arrived.

"O zat was before you were mar-

ried when you did zose great sings," said the wife, and she left the piano and went over and sat down by him, resting her head against his shoulder in such a way as not to interfere with the free movement of his hands.

The sculptor took the pipe out of his mouth long enough to kiss her on the back of the neck and went on with his work.

I had always believed that a romance lay hidden away somewhere in their past, and I felt now that I was getting very close to it; but I knew that it was a very shy and tender thing, and I lay quite still, pretending not to see it lest I should scare it away. Through all the years that I had known them, they

had never talked of themselves, except in the most general way, and I thought now how delightful it would be to have the story from their own lips, in that soft tongue that was like the lisp of children, and with that exceeding piquancy which was due to their placing the accent on the wrong syllable in the word and the emphasis on the wrong word in the sentence, the effect of which is as charming to the ear as it is impossible to convey in print.

Nothing more was said for several minutes, and then I asked, carelessly: "Was it long before you were married?"

"A year," replied the wife. "He went to Zhermany to study because

zhere was so much better opportunity for a young artist in Zhermany zhan at home. He went zhere to get fame in a year—and he did," she added, looking at him proudly.

"I was bound to have it," said the sculptor. "I was betwothed to her and I knew zat a year was ze longest time I could lif wizout her."

"He had yust fifteen dollar of your money when he went away, poor little boy! and when he came back he look like a greyhound, he was so thin. You see, when we were betwothed, he had to take me to see his relatives, who lived in different parts of the country, and it took some money. When he

came to go he had very little left. Of course I did not know how it was wiz him, and zen I did not know zat he was a great artist," she added jestingly.

As she said this she looked at him and her eyes were like two stars burning through the blue immensity of a summer night. I thought that with the tremendous propelling power of her love and her belief in him behind him he could not well be less than great eventually, whatever he might have been when he found her.

"If your father was a prominent official and drew a salary from the government, how did you happen to be in such straits for money?" I asked.

"You must know," he replied, with large charity for my western ignorance, "zat nearly every man in Europe who does anysing great in science or art is poor. His salary is small and he spends it all on his work. He has nussing to give his children when he dies; also, he does not feel ashamed of being poor."

After this the conversation flagged again, and I felt that I was once more in danger of losing the story. Finally I asked: "How did you come to be engaged?"

"She had stood for me for ze head of a figyah I was making," explained the sculptor simply.

"But zat was not ze first time we

met, Otto," said the wife, laughing. Then turning to me: "We were out skating, my sister and I, and we saw two boys scuffling about on ze ice as if zey could not skate. It was Otto and his bwother, and at last one of zem, it was Otto, fell spwalling wight in fwont of us, and my sister and I, we laughed till we cwied at zose awkward boys."

"I wanted to see her close by," explained the sculptor. "I had seen her often on ze stweet, and I used to go up one side and down ze other, yust to look at her, but I never could get but yust a glimpse."

My mind made a picture of her, young, lithe and glowing, skimming the ice like a bird, and I did not wonder that any young fellow with

a heart under his waistcoat and blood in his veins should seize the first opportunity of prostrating himself before her, even at the risk of laying himself open to the charge of awkwardness, for the sake of getting a look at her "close by."

"Zen he wanted me to sit faw ze head," proceeded the wife, "and it took a good deal of courwage for a young boy like him, he was not known at all in zat time, to come and ask my mother to let him make a study of my head."

"She did not consent, of course," I said quite confidently, at which they both laughed merrily.

"It is not with us as it is with you," they both explained in a

breath. "But, zen, it is not ze custom faw young girls to sit faw artists, and it was a great concession faw my mother to make; she had to know all about Otto first," Mrs. Dahl added.

"I was half a year making zat bust," said the sculptor slyly, "and I never would have finished it if it had not been for going abroad to study. I was in love by ze end of ze first hour."

"And of course he could not make love to me, because I had an escort who always followed me un ze studio when I went. It was not permitted faw young people to be alone together in zat time."

"That must have been dread-

ful!" I exclaimed, trying to compass the situation with my untutored sense of things. "How did you manage it?"

"I soon found a way of conveying my thoughts to her so zat nobody else could understand," replied the sculptor; "and after zat ze escort made no more difference zan if he had been a Hottentot."

"And zen he went to Zhermany and was un ze studio of a great artist there."

"And ze artist," added the sculptor, "wanted me to work faw him by ze day. He had many figyaws, and ze students would work faw him and he would put on ze last touches.

He wanted me to work, but I would not. Also I had nussing to eat."

"But why wouldn't you work for him if he paid you?"

"I wanted to finish my Hercules."

"And he lived on eight cents a day—one meal, and a spoonful of bwandy faw bweakfast and lunch?"

"Ah," said the sculptor lightly, "it was a whole year, but at last I finish him—my Hercules."

"And zen ze critic, ze greatest critic in Berlin, came one day to ze studio, and saw zat Hercules, and what he haf written about him haf made Otto famous in ze same day," added the wife with suppressed eagerness. "It is because of zat criticism zose Zhermans haf ever

since call him Hercules Dahl. Zey were nice to us, zose Zhermans—not a bit zheelous. We met some of zem afterwards in Italy," she went on, with her eyes fixed upon the west where a gorgeous sunset was just reaching a climax.

"It was very funny in zose days after he haf written of my Hercules," continued the sculptor. "I was invited everywhere, among ze big literati and ze artists of great fame, and ze onliest pair of twousers I had had fwinge on ze bottom; also on my cuffs I had fwinge.

"Once a servant refuse to take in my card because of ze fwinge. I was what you call an athlete in zose days, and I looked very fierce and

say, 'If you do not take in ze card I will thwow you in ze stweet.'"

He laughed gaily at the remembrance. "Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "couldn't you rent a dress suit?" feeling that this would have been the natural recourse of an American in the premises.

"I had no money," he answered with a shrug; "also I would haf preferred ze fwinge."

Then Mrs. Dahl, at my request, produced the criticism and I learned from it what might be accomplished in a single year, with love as the motive power, and I felt quite elated because I had been able to detect the signs of greatness without knowing anything about "zat Her-

cules" or "ze criticism which haf made Otto famous in ze same day."

I went over to the window and looked out. The sun, red as a carbuncle and big as a coach wheel, lay rocking on the horizon line, and the city and the prairie beyond floated in a sea of ineffable glory—a flood of rose and violet. Each window of the meanest tenement which faced that glowing gateway had become a jewel of surpassing splendor, and every spire a fiery arrow piercing the canopy of cloud and vapor, winged for the blue dome of the infinite.

Only the hand of Omnipotence could paint that weltering Gehenna with the hues of unutterable beauty;

but Omnipotence had stooped to the task, and it was as though the very pit of hell itself had been for one brief instant touched by the effulgence of the Eternal Pardon. For me, in that same hour, the whole black Tartarus of human experience was irradiated by the tender glow of a rare and isolated, but absolute merging of two lives into one—the only instance of a perfect love that has ever come into my ken. That exquisite idyl that had played itself out before me there among the housetops was not a thing that somebody had written to sell to an editor; it was real, for I had seen it —and it lifted my soul out of the mire of disgust and loathing in

which it had been steeped for years. In one brief hour it had redeemed a race. I was grateful for having been allowed to see it, as Moses had seen but once only, from Pisgah's top, the land of promise; and I thanked

"Whatever Gods there be"

for these two people who had found the haven which I and so many others had passed in the night and so been driven out to sea.

PRESS NOTICES

OF

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor."

BY D. HIGBEE,

AUTHOR OF

"In 'God's Country,'" and "Un Ze Studio."

ATLANTA, GA.:
THE FRANKLIN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO
Geo. W. Harrison, State Printer, Manager.
1895.

"SCHERZO IN B-FLAT MINOR."

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," a musical romance, by D. Higbee, from the press of the Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, Atlanta, has met with a wonderful success, and the sales have been something beyond the expectations of all concerned, the character of the work taken into consideration. The notices the story, or as some have called it, the etching, has received from the press of the country have been both flattering and otherwise, but of such a character in both instances as to be exceedingly gratifying to the author, and have been made by the leading critics and writers.

The Scherzo is written in an entirely different vein from Miss Higbee's story of "In God's Country," which met with such wonderful success a few years ago, and tends to show her remarkable ability as a writer, and while this last effort on her part will not reach the same class of readers as the first, it is a production that will always live, and will appeal to the element interested in the highest development of letters.

The book is a work of art from the printer's standpoint, and reflects great credit upon the Franklin Printing Company, and is a production that cannot be excelled by any other printing establishment in this country.

The following is a "preface" written by Miss Higbee, originally intended to be printed in the book, and which will be used in the

second edition, soon to be issued, and which probably gives the author's own impressions in the story better than anything that has yet been written :

"'The Scherzo in B-flat Minor' is a study of impressions rather than of situations; a narrative of moods, rather than of events. It is the story of those moods, or attitudes of mind, through which the man of sensitive and high-strung temperament, lacking the capacity for the hustle and horn-blowing so necessary to success in this nineteenth century, passes upon his way to such recognition as is vouchsafed him in a generation that is too busy with its own affairs to seek after merit that is lurking in the shadow of obscurity, and too set in its opinions and its tastes to accept a thing that is not wholly to its liking and quite within its comprehension.

"There are many men in the world to-day, not only in literature, but in other branches of art, who, through no fault of their own, find themselves charged, like Felix, with a message that is either unintelligible or unwelcome to the mass of the people by whom they are surrounded.

"There is certainly a way to success for every man who is content to walk therein. To the man who has no artistic conscience, who is not averse to doing the thing that is demanded of him, the way is open and obvious. The standards which prove a man's capacity and determine his career are two : the standard of money and the standard of art, and they rarely coincide. It is only after a man's reputation is made that he can use it for the purpose of whipping the public into line, and the questions that confront him in the beginning are: Which shall it be, God or Mammon? Shall I stifle the appeal which nature is seeking to utter through me—that appeal which burns to be delivered—and so put money in my purse? Shall I play harlequin before a whimsical and

thoughtless multitude and win for myself a little laughter and a little of that which will keep me from going hungry; or shall I flaunt the standard of the eternal verities in the face of the multitude and be trampled under foot for my folly?

"The decision might be easy enough were it not for the fact that sometimes a man's whole bent and yearning sets in an irresistible current toward the unwelcome and the unprofitable (at least from the worldly point of view) and that the effort to turn the current out of its natural course requires a struggle that does violence to all that seems to him most worthy of devotion.

"A man may be highly gifted intellectually without having the physical strength and the mental poise necessary to carry him through the ordeal of such a struggle, and if to this peculiarity of temperament be added that lack of incentive which too often obtains in the lives of persons cut adrift from their species by the snapping of all natural ties, the scale is pretty apt to kick the beam on the wrong side.

"Emerson says that 'to the intellect there is no sin,' and the poet or the philosopher who lives subjectively, is not held in check by the fear that is bred of superstition; hence, to such a one suicide is simply a question of changing his base of operations. Shall I live in this house or that? Shall I work under these conditions or those? Shall I bear the ills I have or fly to those I know not of?

"This is the mood in its incipiency. By and by it ceases to wear an interrogative aspect. The one wild, intense, ungovernable yearning of the soul is to be free. Life, this mortal coil, is like a house that has become uninhabitable by reason of the rasping noises, the pestiferous insects that infest it; every sensation has a sting in it.

"This is not a healthful mood truly; far from it; but it is a mood that all fine-natured, highly-gifted men experience at some

time in their lives. It is the mood in which Hamlet utters the incomparable soliloquy; in which the impetuous Gloster cries

> "'Well, say there is no kingdom then for Richard,
> What other pleasure can this world afford?'

The mood in which Jesus asked of his disciples: 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour?' Even the least of us have, at some time in our lives, arrived at it—this focus that shows us only the futility of things. How a man passes this ordeal depends upon temperament and the circumstances which surround him.

"The soldier, preferring death to a crownless head, commits his life to the chance of war and turns his weapons against the obstacles that shut him from the eminence he fain would win; the poet, in the 'piping time of peace,' has no such resource. Thought and action turn inward and the blade is sheathed in his own heart; the prophet without honor, in mystic exaltation, looks upward and says: 'Not my will, but thine, O Father!' and one event happeneth to all."—*Walter Howard, in Atlanta (Ga.) Journal.*

It is curious that stories relating to music are so uniformly melancholy. "The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," by D. Higbee, is a dreary tale. It has the merit of brevity, and it is gracefully written, but it is certainly not calculated to promote buoyancy.—*Indianapolis (Ind.) News.*

Mrs. Dolly Higbee Geppert has broken her long silence and published in Atlanta a novelette, "The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," characterized by all her felicity of style, but thoroughly morbid in tone and subject. It was very ungentlemanly in her hero to drown himself in the reservoir from which his fellow-citizens got their

drinking water, and it was quite impossible for him to hear the voice of the mowers at the time of year to which he lingered on. *Louisville (Ky.) Commercial.*

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," by D. Higbee, is a musical story, in which a musician who is a dreamer, a failure, and, possessed of "the heart-weariness that comes of the love of many women," returns to his native land and finds the mate of his soul in a contralto singer. Before they have met she dies, and he soon follows her.—*San Francisco (Cal.) Argonaut.*

We are indebted to Mr. D. Higbee, of Atlanta, for a most curious and fascinating *brochure.* Taking for his theme the singularly melancholy B-flat minor Scherzo of Chopin, Mr. Higbee has produced a powerful psychologic study of which not the least interesting feature is the consummate skill with which words are made to produce and echo the mystical effects of the music itself. Taking the scherzo movement of Chopin, the writer has caused it to haunt an ingenious life-story in which the longings and disappointments of a young musician are told. The thread of mysticism and romance running through the story is exquisite, and the end as sad and pathetic as Chopin's own. It may be said by close critics that the little sketch is morbid and unwholesome, but there is no denying its poetic and pathetic beauty.—*Chicago (Ill.) Presto.*

Mrs. Dollie Higbee Geppert, of Atlanta, Ga., has just published a musical romance entitled "The Scherzo in B-flat Minor." To those familiar with the friendship between Mrs. Geppert and Mrs. Llewellyn Smith, formerly of this city but now a resident of Cin-

cinnati, it is evident that she has selected this lady as the heroine of the story. Her description of her looks and of her appearance in concert indicate Mrs. Smith, but the termination is, of course, a mere fanciful one. The building on the corner of Fourth and Walnut streets, which has been the abode of so many musicians, including Mr. Waller, is mentioned in the tale, and our local musical entertainments given for sweet charity's sake get a cruel scoring.—*Louisville (Ky.) Times.*

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor" is a melancholy morceau, by D. Higbee, author of "In God's Country." It is a musical story, beginning in hopeless love and ending in suicide. The tale is well written and attractive, in spite of its tragic termination.—*Pittsburg (Pa.) Press.*

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," a musical story, by D. Higbee, has just been sent out to the world. Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, publishers, Atlanta, Ga. The sketch is one of the modern stories, with no plot to it, but beautifully written and intensely interesting. The author has extraordinary talent in his delineations of character, and, although the story is rather sad, it is of great merit and something entirely different from most of the stories of the time. The binding of the book is specially attractive. *Jacksonville (Fla.) Times-Union.*

Mr. Higbee is favorably known to us as the author of "In God's Country," an unusually clever novel of Southern life and character. In the musical novelette which he has now published he has hardly, however, fulfilled the promise of his earlier volume. The story is slight, vague, and ineffective, and will not advance the author's reputation.—*Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier.*

The author sends me a quaintly gotten-up booklet called "Scherzo in B-flat Minor." It is a short and very poetically flavored story, and is by D. Higbee, and comes from an Atlanta publisher. Mr. Higbee has considerable skill in what is called word-painting. The story is a desperate one. It tells of a fine, sensitive, proud spirit, that, refusing to be comforted by conventional shams of the world, leaves it after losing his all—a beautiful young singer with whom he was never acquainted. The B-flat minor scherzo of Chopin is employed as a background, and its various themes are skillfully woven in the texture of the tale. It is pessimistic in the extreme, and when I finished I said, "Another plea for suicide." But Mr. Higbee's story is more than that, although unquestionably morbid. It has the Poe-esque coloring, with the musical interest superadded. I can recommend it only to stout, healthy young parties, whose touch suggests beefsteak and onions. Sentimental persons should avoid it. It is too much already their way of viewing life.—*New York Musical Courier.*

Felix was a disgruntled and disappointed soul for whom life held nothing, but when he met that woman on the street he thought that there might be a possibility in it, and when he heard her sing the song that he wrote it quite clinched the matter. It is a short story, and too long by half.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

Dolly Higbee's (Mrs. William Geppert) "Scherzo in B-flat Minor" is a very clever piece of work along a new and puzzling line. It is calculated to make the reader think, and deals with a man who returns to his home "with the depression of spirit born of failure, and the heart-weariness that comes of the love of many women." It is more than clever. It is subtle; and as haunting as an unkept resolution.

Mrs. Geppert is not easily surpassed as a writer of English. There is something powerful and pointed in every sentence, and her thoughts are always crisply expressed and well developed. The story is illusive and somehow not to be explained, and yet it is there awaiting the reader, nor is it lacking in significance because the outlines are faint. The moral is peculiar and one that each man must consider for himself. The story's only touch of humor is inspired by the buzzing audience at an amateur concert for charity—"a motley crowd," says the author, "drawn together by one of those ingenious devices of civilization by which the victim is first robbed and afterwards tortured in the name of the brotherhood of man."—*Miss Stocker, in Atlanta (Ga.) Journal.*

Mrs. William Geppert's book is being considerably discussed, and succeeds in making a very deep impression on a great many people. The following criticism is sent in by one of the many who have read her words with interest and pleasure:

"There is a delicate subtlety, a palpitating minor chord of unrest, of misspent passion, unrealized ambition and unfulfilled desires, which thrill through this little story,—or rather sketch, for one would scarce call it a story. There is no plot—no endless introduction of uninteresting characters—no love-making—no dialogue. It tells of a man who, weary in heart and soul, tired of wandering around an unappreciative world, returns to his native village to seek—not happiness or content—but rest—dull, quiet, uneventful rest. He has fought the fight and comes forth beaten. But even here, there are moments when his chafed spirit bursts the bonds and breaks forth in wild vituperation at, and contempt of, the 'common herd.' And then, she comes, with her great luminous eyes, two points of divine radiance gazing back at the heaven from which they had been temporarily banished and—

that's all. No, not quite, for she dies, and he, who in her life, never sought her for fear of disenchantment; for fear she would afflict him with that soul-sickness that comes of sounding for sympathy and finding the lead strike bottom before the line is half reeled off, awakens to the realization that she was that 'twin soul,' that 'perfect unison without which life is one long bitterness.' Regret avails naught, the impotence of 'irreclaimable loss,' the heart sick grief at 'what might have been,' sweeps over him like an engulfing wave. In his despair he tries to solve the problem which has proved the rock on which many a vessel has gone to pieces—the mystery of death. That mystery of 'ceasing to be' by one's own volition. And one day in the stillness of the autumn evening, when the glinting sunlight cast little quivering ripples of light on a broad expanse of water, he solved the problem. It is rather unsatisfactory to have one's hero to commit suicide. And one can't help feeling vexed with the latter for allowing his golden opportunities to pass without making any effort to grasp them. After reaching the end one is not wholly satisfied. It awakens a responsive chord of sadness and grief and unconsummated hopes. It lingers on the senses like a strain of music, haunting one with its vague unrest. Perhaps its very charm lies in this, for one is very apt to turn the dainty covers and reread the story of the man 'with the depression of spirit born of failure and heart-weariness that comes of the love of many women.' "—*Miss M. Brown in Atlanta (Ga.) Journal.*

The appearance of this pretty little book is most inviting. Upon the old blue cover is a bar of the music of Chopin and the author's autograph. The print and the paper are beautiful. A bar of music and a verse of poetry precede each chapter. The style is clear and the language shows that the writer has words at his com-

mand that are strong and forcible. But the story—there's the disappointment. It is the rapture of a musician who has wasted life with a prodigal hand. Having exhausted every emotion, he is ready to die at thirty-five. He catches a glimpse of a beautiful woman and dreams of her. He does not care to know her. One day the bell tolls the message that she is dead. A year drags by and then the hero drowns himself in a park lake. It is a pity that ability should be wasted in writing an unwholesome and immoral sketch, for surely suicide as the only solace for a talented mind is not a moral or inspiring lesson.—*Denver (Colo.) Times.*

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor" is a pretty story by D. Higbee, author of "In God's Country," Atlanta, Ga. It is a well told tale of an abnormal sort of soul.—*St. Joseph (Mo.) Daily News.*

Atlanta's latest contribution to literature is entitled "The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," and is from the pen of "Dolly" Higbee, now Mrs. William Geppert. I would hesitate to commend this little book to readers of the Yellow Aster and Green Carnation school, but those who occasionally indulge in the luxury of celebration will thank me, I feel confident, for directing it to their attention. It makes no pretensions to being a story, but is a powerful and somber metaphysical analysis hung upon an exceedingly slender thread of incident. I would call it, if pressed for a phrase, a study in *ennui*. The central figure is an impossible young gentlemen named Felix, whose energies have been sapped by inaction, and who fails to marry the girl he loves because he fears he may live to regret it. The rest is a description of his swift transition to the ultimate depths of pessimism and disenchantment, with a note of tragedy at the curtain. The chief charm of the book lies in its felicitous handling and epigrammatic touches. I congratu-

late Mrs. Geppert on a thoughtful, serious, and most creditable performance.—*Atlanta (Ga.) Looking Glass.*

"The Scherzo in B-flat Minor," by D. Higbee, is a musical novel not up to the standard of "Charles Auchester" quite, but a piece of literary work very well done. There is a glorious singer, a despairing composer, and a suicide. The author ought to try his hand again and on a larger scale.—*Minneapolis (Minn.) Journal.*

Although not exactly in the line of insurance literature, we are pleased to commend to our reading *clientele* this clever little story by Mrs. Geppert, *née* Miss Dolly Higbee, so long and favorably known to readers of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, and other leading journals. We interrupt at once the thread of our comment to call attention to the little *faux pas* of the *Musical Courier*, which, in its last issue, notes this book and refers repeatedly to *Mr.* Higbee as the author. It is a little matter, perhaps, but Mrs. Geppert is too entirely a lady to be thus unsexed by the infallible *Courier* without a word of protest.

Now as to the book. Mrs. Geppert has taken "Chopin's B-flat minor Scherzo" as a foundation thread upon which to weave, in the guise of fiction, a thoughtful discussion of certain prevalent moods characteristic of the *fin de siècle*—not in a flippant way, but with a sympathetic appreciation of the tinge of pessimism which gives color to the intellectual life of our times.

It was Horace Walpole, we think, who said, "To him who thinks life is a comedy; to him who feels life is a tragedy," and it is with a frank, though not hopeless, recognition of the underlying truth involved in this *bon mot* that Mrs. Geppert (Miss Higbee) has written.

Holohe

D. Higbee's Books.

"IN 'GOD'S COUNTRY.'"

Out of Print.

"THE SCHERZO IN B-FLAT MINOR."

Price 50 cents. Franklin Printing & Publishing Co.
Atlanta, Ga.

"UN ZE STUDIO." An Idyl of the Housetops.

Price 50 cents. Franklin Printing & Publishing Co.
Atlanta, Ga.

"SIDE LIGHTS." What the Society Editor Saw.

In Press. Franklin Printing & Publishing Co.
Atlanta, Ga.

Conover Pianos.

HIGH IN PRICE, BUT NO
BETTER MADE IN THE WORLD

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Nov. 23, 1893.

CONOVER PIANO CO.

GENTLEMEN: I purchased a Conover Upright Piano some fourteen years ago, since which time it has been in daily use, and I am pleased to state that it has given me entire satisfaction.

Yours truly,

ERNST HARTMAN.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE HECKMAN BINDERY, INC.
BOUND TO PLEASE
FEB. 69
N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
00014837723